1:Evans-Pritchard E-4 (no date) 1948
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settlements on the east bank and along the lower reaches of the Sobat. Their country is treeless savannah but, unlike their cousins the Nuer and Dinka, they are predominantly agricultural and sedentary, for their long river frontage gives them adequate water and grazing in the dry season for the comparatively few cattle (about 25,000) they possess.[1] The brief account I give of their social structure is mostly derived from articles in *Sudan Notes and Records* by Mr Pumphrey and Mr Howell.[2]

The hamlets (*myer*, sing. *pac*), built from 100 yards to a mile or so apart on high ground parallel to the river, vary in size from one to fifty homesteads; a homestead (*gol*), the residence of a family (*gol*), consisting usually of two huts encircled by a fence. Each hamlet is occupied by members of an extended family, or small lineage, with their wives, and the homesteads of this group are arranged in a rough horseshoe shape around a common cattle-byre, which shelters the animals in the rains and is used as a club at all seasons, and a common kraal. The headman of a hamlet (*jal dwong pac*) who is also the head of a lineage in

[1] I am indebted to Mr John Donald of the Sudan Political Service for the most recent figures of human and bovine population.
[2] M. E. C. Pumphrey, 'The Shilluk Tribe', *S.N. and R.* (1941); P. P. Howell, 'The Shilluk Settlement', *ibid.* (1941).

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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63] on page 45. Gar, the northern division, has Colbati as its capital. Each division has five provinces; those of Lwak from south to
[71] north are Tung or Tonga, Odong or Panyikang (Fenikang, with capital Fenikang, containing the great shrine of Nyakang, perhaps the holiest of all Shilluk shrines), Adiel or Diblin, and Padit, while Gar is divided into Didwok, Dimoth, Nom, Dhyang Dwong, and Jangwiang; the two latter are more or less equivalent to the geographical area called Mwom, embracing the most northerly portion of the Shilluk kingdom with its capital Akurwa, the site of one of the most important shrines of Nyakang.

The chiefs of Mwom and Tonga were said to wield most power; the chief of Kwom is naturally somewhat eclipsed by the presence of the king in this district.

341 It is difficult to describe a Shilluk village; in fact, the word is hardly applicable to the Shilluk settlement. In typical Shilluk country on the west bank a series of small hamlets may be seen lying from a quarter to a mile or more back from the river, succeeding each other, as has been well said, like beads on a string. Most of these hamlets are small, consisting of only a few homesteads. Each homestead
● 59] belongs to one householder and contains some three or four huts
343 surrounded by a fence of millet stalks. One hut is the sleeping apartment of the householder and his wife—if there is more than one wife each woman will have her own hut—one is used for cooking, and others may be assigned to servants, or slaves if any are attached to
604 the family. The householders in each hamlet are members of a single
631 clan, with descent in the male line, and are often closely related by blood.

Thus the hamlet is both a social and a local group, and though the usual word for clan is *kwa* (which is also used for "family" or "ancestor", and for "grandfather") our informants at Fenikang often used the territorial prefix *pe* (or *fe*), which literally means "place", for the group that occupied one hamlet. It is clear that members of the same *kwa* are clansmen, whether they dwell in one hamlet or are located at a distance. Another word that seemed to have the same significance was *gol*. Actually, as Mr. Henry informs us, this is a smaller unit formed within the *kwa*, arising
613 through some influential man starting a settlement of his own, when
614 his descendants (living there) form his *gol* until they become a large
621 and powerful unit, take a new name, and become a *kwa*. Thus the *gol* Nyikako near Dolebi Hill takes its name from an influential

Part II

THE SOCIAL ORGANISATION, POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND MAIN CULTURAL FEATURES OF THE NILOTES

INTRODUCTION

The structure and organisation of the Nilotic tribal groups, though showing similarities in many respects and suggesting a certain degree of progressive variation from one or two structural types, cannot be considered in one descriptive whole owing to the complexity of the subject. It is therefore proposed to consider the main Nilotic groups in turn and in conclusion to point out some of the features common to all.

Except where specifically mentioned, the information refering to a people applies to their indigenous organisation.

THE SHILLUK

GENERAL

The Shilluk live in a number of hamlets and settlements which, almost without a break, line the west bank of the White Nile from about 11°N. Lat. to Lake No in the south. There are also a few settlements on the east bank and along the lower reaches of the Sobat river.

They are predominantly agricultural and sedentary, owning comparatively few cattle. The long river frontage of their habitat gives them adequate water and grazing in the dry season for the few cattle they do possess. There are no large scale transhument movements in the dry season to find cattle pastures. Only youths go into dry season cattle camps which are situated mainly on islands in the river or in dry water-courses near it. The cultivations are likewise nearby, either in the settlement area or inland a short distance away. Ecological conditions therefore enable the people to remain in the same place all the year round and render the settlement areas self-contained economically.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS AND KINSHIP UNITS

The homestead (gol)

The gol is the smallest social unit in the tribe and usually consists of about two huts encircled by a fence. Every married man has a gol which he occupies with his wife, or wives, and children. In addition

there may be a dependent relative or friend. A man's sons live in his homestead until they get married; if their father is dead, they live in the *gol* of their eldest brother or in that of their father's married brother. The owner of the homestead is the head of the *gol*; he holds the cattle belonging to the unit and is responsible for the behaviour of the members of his *gol*. He has to pay cattle in compensation for any wrong which may be committed by any of the members.

The Hamlet (pac)

Hamlets are built about 200 yards apart on high ground parallel to the river. They vary considerably in size according to the number of homesteads which compose them. The homesteads of a hamlet are grouped round a cattle kraal containing a hut which shelters all the herds in the rainy season. The byre and hut are used as the general meeting-places and social centres for the inhabitants at all times and guests are entertained there. There is often a *gwa*, a hut with no surrounding fence, which is used as a dormitory by the unmarried men. The hamlet is a homogeneous unit being an extended family group or a small lineage.

The Settlement (pouth)

The settlement consists of a number of hamlets, occupied by different lineages. There are several hundred settlements, often not spacially distinct from one another. There is, however, a structural division which is recognised by the people themselves in referring to the settlement units. In spite of lineage differentiations within each settlement, all unite to defend the whole, all take part in the ritual of the age-set organisation, all participate in the settlement's relations with other settlements and all acknowledge a common chief.

The lineage organisation within a settlement revolves round two recognised types of lineage: the *dyil* and the *wuth*. It is said that Nyikang, the Shilluk culture hero and founder of the present Shilluk tribe, originally granted each settlement to a clan. The surviving descendants of the grantees are considered the 'owners of the soil' and are termed *dyil* to distinguish them from lineages which settled on their land later and which are called *wuth*. If the original owners of the land are extinct, the *wuth* lineage next in importance takes their place and becomes *dyil*. The members of the *dyil* lineage are closely associated with the land they occupy and are accorded considerable prestige and authority in virtue of their position and this association. The *dyil* form the core of the settlement and political activities revolve round them. The *wuth* lineage members are not socially inferior, but the *dyil* lineages have greater prestige and are expected to be the leaders in important matters in the settlement. For this reason the *dyil* of a settlement is the 'dominant lineage'.

The chief of the settlement, the *reth*, is taken from the *dyil* lineage. In practice, it occasionally happens that the dominant position of the *dyil* lineage is taken over by a stronger, wealthier, and more numerous lineage but, even if dispossessed of political power and the chieftainship, the original *dyil* lineage retains its ritual connection with the soil and also much of its local prestige. This ritual relationship remains so long as any living representatives of the original *dyil* lineage remain.

his lineage in the settlement and, if he is a representative of the dyil lineage, he will have a special status as representing the owners of the land and the jago will treat him tactfully. The hamlet headman has charge of affairs within his unit and represents his people in external affairs.

The Gol Lemier

The owner of a homestead is responsible for the unmarried members of his gol, but has no special status. The correspondence between territorial divisions and their representatives may be charted as below. (After Pumphrey, S.N.R. 1941, Vol.XXIV, p.7.)

TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS	REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORITY
Shilluk Tribe	The Reth
Lands & Core Provinces	Chiefs of Gol Nyikang & Gol Dhiang
Northern & Southern Marches	Chiefs of Ukwam & Tonga
.....Division (Land).....	.....Division or Court Chief.....
Settlement (Yuak)	Jago
Hamlet (Pur)	Jol wang pur
Homestead (Gol)	Jol Gol

(Dotted line indicates permanent administrative divisions with chiefs made by the Anglo-Egyptian Government. Previously, there were no permanent intermediate territorial units between the two provinces and marches and the settlements.)

THE RETH'S POLITICAL POWER

The actual degree of power possessed by the reth has been a matter for dispute among anthropologists. The majority of the early writers stressed his power and authority. Seligman writes, "The Shilluk king is absolute head temporal and spiritual..."(1) Westermann and others have held likewise. Evans-Pritchard and other recent writers suggest that in administrative matters, the reth is not so powerful.

The chiefs of settlements and the hamlet heads are confirmed in their offices by the reth. In no case, however, does he nominate them, for they are elected by the people of the units they represent in virtue of their positions as heads of lineages dominant in the area. Likewise the chiefs of the provinces and of the northern and southern marches are traditionally determined and persons who are eligible cannot be passed over for reasons of political expediency. On the other hand, the chiefs owe their reth certain duties and are responsible to him for the state of their districts and their inhabitants, for defence of the settlement area and for the collection of tribute. If there is a choice of candidates for any position, each having the necessary ability and lineage qualifications, it is conceivable that the reth might use his influence to have as chief the man most amenable to his wishes; otherwise he appears to have little chance of exercising influence on the choice of his local officials.

(1) Seligman, *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*, 1932, p. 79.

having a great number of local branches, or lineages, spread throughout Shillukland, and there are no periodic reunions.

Members of a lineage are bound not only by kinship ties but also by ties arising through occupation of the same territory. The lineage is an effective political and social unit. A person generally thinks in terms of his localised lineage and refers most often to the founder of his lineage in the district occupied. In relation to members of lineages of other clans, however, reference is most likely to be made to the founding ancestor of a person's clan. As previously mentioned, the occupants of a settlement belong to a collection of independent lineages which graft themselves onto the genealogical structure of the dominant lineage through marriage with its female members.

INHERITANCE

Only the smallest lineage unit is of any importance in the inheritance of property. Pumphrey states that there are no definite rules for the inheritance of chattels.(1) If distribution has not been made before death they are usually taken by the eldest son, or by the next of kin where there are no sons. Cattle are taken by the succeeding gol leader, either a married son or a married brother. He cannot do exactly as he likes with them for he inherits certain traditional obligations. He has the moral obligation to use his herds for providing bridewealth to enable the male members of the gol to marry, in order of seniority, and it is considered wrong for a gol leader to marry a second time himself while there are men of his gol still unmarried and requiring cattle. The gol leader is also responsible for paying compensation in cattle for any wrong which has been committed by one of his household. Finally, it is recognised that no cattle of the family herds should be sold except in times of famine and to purchase grain. Pumphrey states that a breach of these terms of trust would "be universally censured but would probably not be interfered with by the courts."(2)

Uncultivated land belongs to anyone who settles on it.

MARRIAGE

The Shilluk are polygynous; a wealthy and influential man has three or four wives, while members of the kworeth may have several more. Marriage is forbidden with any member of one's father's clan and between all persons in respect of whom relationship, either through the father or mother, could be traced directly. Apart from these obstacles it appears that freedom of choice is generally allowed to both sexes in matrimonial matters.

Bridewealth

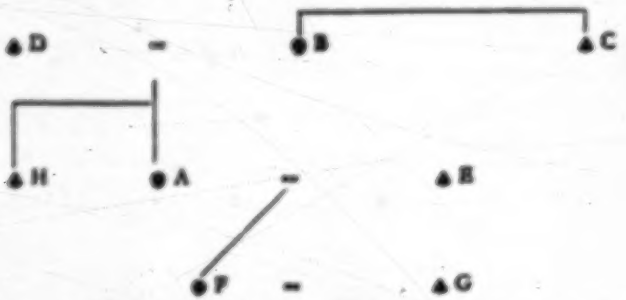
Bridewealth consists of ten head of cattle and sheep and spears. In addition the suitor makes small gifts and performs services to win the favour of his future father- and mother-in-law. Bridewealth discussions and arguments proceed between representatives appointed by the suitor's gol and by the girl's gol.

(1) Pumphrey, J.A.S. 1941, Vol.XXIV, p.24.
(2) Ibid., p.25.

S:Lienhardt E-4 (no date) 1954 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

existence. The smallest unit of Shilluk social structure is the family (*gol*) living in a homestead of one or two huts. From one to fifty or more such homesteads built together form a hamlet, the members of which keep their cattle together, and are gathered round a headman; a group of hamlets forms a settlement, of which there are about a hundred in Shilluk-land. The settlement is composed of branches of different descent groups, one of which is dominant within the settlement and forms a nucleus around which the others form themselves into a distinct community. This dominant descent group or lineage provides the leader or chief of the settlement. Settlements are politically opposed to each other, though there have been in the past loose confederations of settlements, which have been used, and sharpened in outline, for administrative purposes. The whole of Shilluk land is divided into two provinces, Ger in the north and Lusk in the south. All the Shilluk recognize a common head of their whole land, the *reth*, who is here called the king: the king always comes from the royal clan, the *Ameneth*, founded by the first Shilluk king, Nyikang; it is the largest clan in Shilluk land, and may have representatives in any settlement. There is now a royal capital at Fashoda. In Shilluk tradition the earliest Shilluk kings had no fixed capital, but reigned from their natal homes. Now, although the capital at Fashoda has been long established, the wives of the king are sent away from Fashoda to various parts of Shilluk land to bear their children, and the children of the king (*nyireth*) are brought up away from the capital. Only those princes whose fathers have been installed as kings of the Shilluk can themselves claim to be installed and, in theory at least, princes who are thus eligible may at any time advance their claims by killing the reigning king. Besides the royal clan, and the lineages of 'commoner' clans, known collectively as the *cuk*, there is a distinct clan called *nowe*, originally a branch of the royal house, but said to have been disinherited and cut off by an early Shilluk king. Members of this clan have special duties to perform in connexion with the king, but do not have royal status. In addition, there are the *kang reth*, servants of the king, composed of wives of previous kings, descendants of personal attendants of the king, people possessed by the spirit of Nyikang or of some other king, and others who in one way or another have become retainers dependent on the royal house. From these come the guardians and priests of the shrines of Nyikang, of which there are several in various parts of Shilluk country, and the shrines and graves of other Shilluk kings. Offerings are made at these graves and shrines as part of the religious cult of Nyikang and the royal house, which is the main cult of the Shilluk, though offerings are made to their own ancestors also by the heads of the commoner lineages. Their totemic observances seem to amount to little more than not eating the totemic species, and both totemism and the cult of ancestors of commoner descent groups are said to figure less largely in Shilluk religion than the cult of Nyikang and the kings. Shilluk totemism may in fact be of Dinka origin. Besides the priests of the Nyikang cult, and operating apart from them,

of the bride. Among the Shilluk no such obligation exists except in the form of a recognised debt, nowadays enforceable in the Courts, which is dependent on the number of cattle which remain outstanding in the bridewealth of the bride's mother.



Thus, in the diagram, from the bridewealth paid by *E* for *A*, no portion will be set aside for *C*, unless the full bridewealth of ten head of cattle was not paid by *D* on his marriage to *B*. Since few Shilluk can afford to hand over ten head of cattle at once, and because there have been periods when there were few cattle to pay, this is the source of much litigation in the courts. At the same time, such debts are not carried forward a further generation. Thus *C* could not claim cattle outstanding from *B*'s marriage on the marriage of *F*, though *H* might do so from the marriage of *A* to *E*.

The pattern of distribution among paternal kinsmen of the bride is relatively simple, which is perhaps natural when bridewealth stands at so low a figure. If alive, the bride's father's father should receive one cow (which would go to his sons by another wife); the bride's father's brothers (her paternal uncles) and even his half-brothers are also entitled to a share. Speaking in conventional terms only, Shilluk say that where a full brother (uterine) gets two cows, a half-brother only gets one. In fact none of them are likely to get anything more than a sheep or a goat, for if a man has many brothers and half-brothers there would be little or no cattle left for the bride's father or his sons. Distribution is usually dictated by circumstances prior to the marriage and the pattern of previous bridewealth distributions which create reciprocal rights. From an analysis of some fifty Shilluk marriages, my impression is that this form of distribution is quoted as a convention only and is rarely if ever followed now. As among other Nilotes, uterine and half-brothers within one domestic group are expected to marry in strict order of age. A man will generally expect to marry with the cattle brought in by the marriage of his younger uterine sister, if he has one, and, after any deductions which may be necessary to complete the bridewealth payments of the bride's mother and the fulfilment of other debts which may be pressing, he will probably get all the remaining cattle. Though large numbers of sheep and goats[1] are brought in by the marriage, these are not distributed among the bride's paternal kinsmen according to definite claims, nor are they regarded as paid to meet claims which could be interpreted as a survival from times when the

[1] The average seems to be somewhere between fifteen and thirty.

The homesteads are arranged in roughly horse-shoe shape around an open space in which are tethered the sheep and cattle of the hamlet. Within this space is usually a very large hut (*luak*) used for animals in the rains and throughout the year as a guest-house and general village club. There is also usually a normal sized hut, with no surrounding fence, known as the *geu*, which is used as a dormitory by the unmarried men. In this hut are put the ashes of the cattle dung with which the young men cover themselves at night for warmth and protection from flies. Some villages have a tree in the central circle, but more often there is a complete and inhospitable absence of shade.

The homestead (*gol*) consists of two huts between which is an area enclosed by a fence of dura stalks or rough grass matting. The family group inhabiting the homestead is called also (presumably by transference) *gol*, and it is in this latter sense that the word *gol* will be used in this note.

In this sense *gol* is the smallest (though important) social unit in the tribe. An unmarried man does not own a homestead. All unmarried persons live in the homestead and adhere to the *gol* of their father. If their father is dead they adhere to the *gol* of their eldest married brother or, if they have none, to their deceased father's (married) brother. The owner of the homestead to which they adhere is the leader of their *gol*, and as such is responsible for the behaviour of its members. This vicarious responsibility on the part of the *gol* leader is a corollary to the principles of the ownership of cattle (and sheep). The cattle of the *gol* are owned and disposed of by the *gol* leader alone, and since the remedy for a wrong is a payment of cattle it follows that he and not the actual malefactor is held responsible. The position resembles that of the Roman family where the paterfamilias alone is *sui juris*, all others being *alieni juris*. The Shilluk *filiei familiae*, however, becomes *sui-juris* on marriage which the Roman son did not. The vicarious responsibility of the *gol* leader has the convenient aspect that the *gol* leader is more easily found by the arm of the law than the actual malefactor because of the fact that he owns a homestead.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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and in others from the Settlement Chief. In a few cases this *lau* (sometimes designated as *lau thin*, (minor *lau*,) to distinguish it from the *lau* of the Settlement Chief) is given neither by the *Reth* nor by the Settlement Chief but by the chief of the settlement from which this lineage migrated into their present locality. This is uncommon.

The headman of a principle village represents his lineage within the settlement. To a certain extent he is and should be made responsible for the taxes of his lineage. If he is the representative of the *dyil* lineage he will have a special status as representative of the true owners of the soil, and in this case the Settlement Chief will tend to regard him with some apprehension as the leader of a potentially rival faction.

The headman of a subsidiary village has a lowly status. He has no *lau* and is no more than the head of a family group. Many villages, especially in Luak, are very small, consisting perhaps of a single homestead so that a headman may be the only taxpayer in his village. The forming of such separate homesteads is contrary to good order and should be discouraged as far as possible. In Delal and Atodwoi Divisions the villages are on the whole very much bigger and the tribal discipline tends consequently to be better.

THE GOL LEADER.

Every married man has a homestead although it may comprise only himself and his wife. As the owner of a homestead he is a *gol* leader. As such he has little official status but, as has already been explained, he is entirely responsible for the unmarried members of his *gol* and should collect their taxes and hand them to the headman.

To recapitulate we may tabulate the political ladder as follows:—

Shilluk tribe	.. ..	*Reth.*
Luak and Ger	.. ..	Chiefs of *Gol Nyikang* and *Gol Dhiang*.
Division (*luak*)	.. ..	Division (or Court) Chief.
Settlement (*podh*)	..	Settlement Chief.
Hamlet (*pac*)	.. ..	*Jal dwong pac.*
Gol	.. .. ..	*Jal Gol.*

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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CHAPTER 5.

CUSTOMARY LAW.

PROPERTY.

Since the *Kwar* entire has been split into lineages within the various settlements the ties of clan have become weaker and now operate practically only within the settlement. *Pari passu* with this slackening of the ties of the clan has occurred a change in the ownership of cattle[30]. Possibly the clan used to own cattle in a communal herd from which were disbursed cattle in return for wives from another clan. At present the cattle of each hamlet are kept rigidly apart and not even within the hamlet are they communally owned. The *gol* leader alone owns cattle and he alone, as has already been described, can dispose of them. He alone allots cattle as bride wealth for unmarried male members of his *gol* and receives cattle paid to the *gol*, whether as marriage price or as compensatory payment for a wrong.

It is not perhaps too fanciful to compare his position with that of a trustee towards beneficiaries (who are the members of his *gol*). He is the sole legal owner and can, legally, dispose of them as he chooses. He holds them in fact however subject to a trust which equity will enforce. The terms of the trust are that all cattle shall be applied solely towards the marriages of male members of the *gol* in order of their seniority, that no cattle shall be sold except for the purchase of grain in time of famine, and that the *gol* leader shall not himself marry a second time unless there is no unmarried male member of the *gol* of marriageable age. Any compensatory payment becoming due from the *gol* on account of a wrong should take precedence over any other payment. A breach of these "terms of trust" would be universally censured but would probably not be interfered with by the courts, which tend conveniently to hold that a *gol* leader has full and sole right as to disposal.

It is interesting that where a compensatory payment for killing is due the net is cast wider and not only the entire lineage but even members of other lineages of the same clan may be required to contribute.

30. Where "cattle" is used in this chapter it may be taken to extend also to goats.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

177 422 436 Recently, owing to the cultivation of cotton and to the increase in demand for work at Malakal and elsewhere, the value of money has come to be more appreciated. Most of the money so acquired is stored up for the purchase of a bull, very little being spent in shops. [454 556] The purchaser of a bull not unreasonably objects to its going into the maw of the *gol* herd and accordingly deposits it for safe keeping with a distant friend. This innovation, which is no less than the introduction of a system of private ownership of cattle, is calculated to work eventually a deep change in customary law. The growth of cash-[684] mindness has already resulted in cash being sometimes substituted for a bull in cases of payments in compensation for sexual wrongs. No case is known where cash has been accepted instead of one or more of the bride wealth cattle, but this would be logically the next step. [182 583] The effect of a change to cash bride wealth would be large. The present system makes for tribal cohesion and for the administratively convenient system of vicarious responsibility, whereas cash marriage payments would loosen remaining cohesion of the *gol* and render each man responsible for himself. Cattle would cease to become a medium of exchange in marriage contracts and become a commodity. The innumerable goats would cease to eat up the cotton and the products [146] of the Mission gardens and instead themselves be eaten, much to the benefit of the Shilluk physique according to medical opinion. The economic absurdity of the Malakal Hospital contractor being sometimes compelled to import tinned milk by air so as not to forfeit his deposit would be avoided. The possibility of such economic advantages is to be set against the consequent lessening of tribal cohesion.

Succession.

428 567 There are no definite rules for the inheritance of chattels. Distribution usually takes place before death. If not they will generally be taken by the eldest son, or, in default of sons, by the next-of-kin to the deceased. The inheritance of chattels rarely produces litigation.

428 592 Cattle are taken by the succeeding *gol* leader, who may be a married son or a married brother according to circumstances. In any case the new *gol* leader holds the cattle inherited under the same trust as

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
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that under which the deceased held them. For example if a man dies leaving four sons, two married and two unmarried, the two unmarried sons will join the *gol* of their eldest married brother, who thereupon becomes to them *in loco parentis* and their *gol* leader. With this addition to his *gol* the eldest married brother will take also the cattle which used to belong to the deceased, his father, but he will hold them "on trust" for the marriage of these two brothers.

THE MARRIAGE TIE.

Marriage marks the assumption of personal responsibility, signified outwardly by the acquisition of a homestead. A man wishes to marry as many wives as he can because, although a man with one wife is a full member of society, he who has three or four (more being unusual outside the *Kwar Reth*), is a man of substance and power. This is because his *gol* will become large and powerful and in a position to dominate in its locality. Where an appeal to the spear is an ever present possibility there is definite strength in numbers. There is no place in society for batchelors or spinsters of mature age, and in fact with the exception of *Reth's* daughters and the mentally deficient they hardly exist. Women outnumber men, so that polygyny is reasonable and almost necessary.

The marriage tie creates an obligation to pay cattle, but it is not created by or dependent upon such payment. To render a union a marriage only two things are essential. First there must be no positive barrier, (such as known consanguinity between the parties, whether through male or female lines of descent) and secondly there must be an offer and an acceptance. The offer and acceptance are symbolised by the man offering to the women's *gol* a sheep (*dyel dhok*). Acceptance of this sheep signifies acceptance of the suitor. The marriage is then complete. There follows the beer brewing (*tieng mogho*) and a wedding dance which is held in the woman's village and which serves the important purpose of fixing the marriage in the minds of the public. The completion of the cattle payments (*kany*) may be delayed over a period of years, and until they are complete the woman usually continues to live in her own homestead where her husband may visit

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

[233] more practical purpose of tethering the cattle as towards sunset they come winding back from the pasture. In the hot months, if there is no danger from lions, they are left all night in the open and the byre is used as a dormitory by the [513] [342] boys and unmarried men of the village. It is the custom, too, for the unmarried girls to sleep together in vacant huts in the village, for the sleeping hut of a household is reserved [592] for the householder and his wife and small children.

The rear part of the store hut is taken up by an enormous [415] circular grain basket, four feet high and the same in diameter, standing clear of the floor on a wooden, three-legged stand and safe from the depredations of white ants. [252] Whenever possible, cooking is done outside, but during the rains it is done over a fire of sticks or millet stalks burning in a hollow scooped out in the floor near the wall. A variety [415] of pots clutters the floor space: the large earthenware water pot, an earthenware pot and a shallow iron dish for cooking, small beer pots, a number of drinking bowls made from the tough rinds of gourds neatly halved and dried in the sun. [353] The roofing poles, resting on the mud walls and rising to an apex, form convenient places for tucking away household goods and personal treasures. Such an item one cannot fail [241] [261] to notice is that of several large heads of grain; these are stored for the next season's planting, and no matter how desperate the food situation may become, they will remain untouched, for the next year's supply of food depends on this stock of seed. Behind the poles also may be found a fragment of a mirror, a couple of cigarette tins holding a little oil or a handful of beads, a girl's blue dancing cloth or even the [292] good wife's best Sunday frock, run up for her by the Sisters from some material brought from Kodok, probably some dreadful riot of green and red and yellow, hideous indeed to Western eyes, but to the proud owner more delightful than any Paris creation. Sometimes, to a visitor's distress, a line [251] is slung across the hut on which hang dried fish or strips of meat. The high tone of these delicacies, the myriads of flies they attract and the thick, black smoke of the fire which, having no means of getting away, fills the hut, do not make